

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 7, 8, 12-14, and 16-21 are pending in this application. Claims 1-5, 7, 8, 12-14, and 16-21 were variously rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting.

Applicants expressly reserve the right to pursue prosecution of any presently excluded subject matter or claim embodiments in one or more future continuation and/or divisional application(s).

Applicants have carefully considered the points raised in the Office Action and believe that the Examiner's concerns have been addressed as described herein, thereby placing this case into condition for allowance.

Rejections Under Obviousness-Type Double Patenting

Claims 1-4, 7-8, and 12-14 were rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as allegedly being unpatentable over claims 1-2 and 5-11 of U.S. Patent No. 6,645,719.

Without acquiescence to this rejection, submitted herewith is a terminal disclaimer for the instant application with regard to U.S. Patent No. 6,645,719. Accordingly, this rejection may be properly withdrawn.

Claims 1-5, 7-8, 12-14, and 16-21 were provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as allegedly being unpatentable over claims 2-3, 5, 7-11, 13-15, and 17-22 of copending U.S. Application No. 10/233,235.

Without comment on this rejection, Applicants thank the Examiner for bringing U.S. Application No. 10/233,235 to attention. As this rejection is provisional, no action is necessary at this time.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of these rejections.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that all issues raised in the Office Action have been properly addressed in this response. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims is respectfully requested. If the Examiner feels that a telephone interview would serve to facilitate resolution of any outstanding issues, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number below.

In the unlikely event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and the Patent Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, Applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Assistant Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 205032000700. However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

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Respectfully submitted,

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